

REMARKS

Claim 50 has been amended.

Method claims 50 to 54 remain in the application. Among these, claim 50 is the single independent method claim.

The claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based upon Liddicoat et al US 6,702,826.

Liddicoat does not teach or suggest an implant including a portion sized and configured for engagement with a wall of the left atrium above the plane of the native mitral valve annulus to interact with movement of the leaflets of the mitral heart valve to affect mitral heart valve function. In Liddicoat, placation bands are placed in the annulus and linked by strips that either follow the annulus or span between opposite sides of the annulus across the leaflets. Nowhere does Liddicoat teach or suggest an implant that engages a wall of the left atrium above the plane of the annulus. Liddicoat engages the annulus, but does not engage a wall of the atrium above the plane of the annulus.

Support for the amendment can be found, e.g., in Figs. 26 to 33 and associated text in the written description. See also, page 13, lines 1 to 4, which describes a portion within the left atrium that experiences mural (i.e., wall) pressures.

For these reasons, applicant believes that claims 50 to 54 are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,

By

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31 July 2006

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